

**Remarks/Arguments**

Claims 1, 3-6 are pending. The claims have been amended to more clearly and distinctly claim the subject matter that applicant regards as his invention. No new matter is believed to be added by the present amendment.

Responsive to the objection to claim 3, the claim has been amended to conclude with a period.

**Rejection of claims 1-4 under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Gurantz (US Pat No 5936660)**

Applicant submits that for the reasons discussed below amended claims 1-4 are not anticipated under 35 USC 102(e) by Gurantz.

The present application relates to a device having at least two processing pathways for descrambling first and second scrambled signals, each processing pathway comprising respective first and second management means for driving the conversion of the first and second scrambled signals (see page 3, lines 5-16). In that regard, amended claim 1 recites:

- *at least two input interfaces for receiving first and second scrambled signals bearing information subject to pay-per-use,*
- *at least two processing pathways able to undertake the conversion of the first and second scrambled signals into first and second descrambled signals and provide the descrambled signals to at least two output interfaces, and*
- *an access control module able to cooperate with a memory card for conditioning the operation of the at least two processing pathways, the **at least two processing pathways comprising first and second management means for driving the conversions of the first and second scrambled signals, and in that the first management means is arranged to communicate with the access control module to activate the conversion of the first scrambled signals, and the second management means is arranged to communicate with the access control module by way of the first management means to activate the conversion of the second scrambled signals.*** (emphasis added)

Applicant submits that Gurantz fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-emphasized limitations of claim 1.

Gurantz discloses a system having a converter box that employs an independent tuning, demodulation, and video decompression chain for each independently operating television set in the house, but shares a common conditional access circuit, remote control receiver, power supply and chassis. The conditional access unit is connected to all converter chains and performs the signal decryption (col. 2, lines 43-47). Fig. 3 and col. 4, lines 4-48 cited by the examiner describe the plurality of chains that share a single conditional access unit 110.

By contrast, in the device according to the present invention, each processing pathway comprises a management means for driving the conversion of the scrambled signal.

Nowhere does Gurantz disclose or suggest a system comprising separate management means for driving the conversion of scrambled signals in each chain.

Moreover, the present invention provides a hierarchical organization of the management means, where first management means receive first and second control messages from the access control module, and transmits the second control message to the second management means. Specifically, claim 1 recites: "... the first management means is arranged to communicate with the access control module to activate the conversion of the first scrambled signals, and the second management means is arranged to communicate with the access control module by way of the first management means to activate the conversion of the second scrambled signals. In a further embodiment, the first processor is able to drive the second processor according to a protocol of the master/slave type."

Nowhere does Gurantz disclose or suggest such a hierarchical organization. In view of the above, applicant submits that Gurantz fails to teach or suggest all of the limitations of amended claim 1, and as such, amended claim 1, and the claims that depend therefrom, are not anticipated by Gurantz.

**Rejection of claims 5-7 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gurantz in view of Ushiyama (US Pat No 6349140)**

Ushiyama is cited as teaching the feature "a first processor driving a second processor is able to drive the second processor according to a protocol of the master/slave type." with respect to claim 5, and the feature "the first and second input interfaces are linked ..." with respect to claim 6.

However, assuming arguendo that Ushiyama teaches these features, the cited teachings of Ushiyama still fails to cure the defect of Gurantz as applied to claim 1. Therefore, claims 5 and 6, which depend from amended claim 1 are patentably distinguishable over the teachings of the combination of Gurantz and Ushiyama.

Having fully addressed the Examiner's rejections it is believed that, in view of the preceding amendments and remarks, this application stands in condition for allowance. Accordingly then, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner is of the opinion that such action cannot be taken, the Examiner is invited to contact the applicant's attorney at (609) 734-6815, so that a mutually convenient date and time for a telephonic interview may be scheduled.

Respectfully submitted,

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